

## Message Text

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ORIGIN IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 SS-15 NSCE-00 SP-02  
CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 INRE-00 PA-01 SSO-00 /065 R

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-----120888 172300Z /66

O 172134Z JUN 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE  
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 154998

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, SF, WA

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: US PROTEST ON ANNOUNCEMENT ON VOTER  
REGISTRATION

REFS: (A) STATE 154360; (B) BONN 11159

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM CALLED IN  
SOUTH AFRICAN AMBASSADOR SOLE JUNE 16 TO EXPRESS OUR STRONG  
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DISMAY AND DISAPPOINTMENT OVER SOUTH AFRICAN ACTION IN  
PROCEEDING WITH ANNOUNCEMENT OF PLANS TO INITIATE VOTER  
REGISTRATION IN NAMIBIA. IN REPLY, SOLE DREW ON MESSAGE  
WHICH FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA HAD SENT TO FRG FOREIGN  
MINISTER GENSCHER EX-  
PLAINING AND JUSTIFYING SAG ACTION, WHICH SOLE CHARAC-  
TERIZED AS "NEUTRAL" AND "A MATTER OF LOGISTICS". SOLE

ALSO STRESSED THAT ANNOUNCEMENT BY ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL STEYN HAD NOT CONTAINED DATE FOR INITIATION OF REGISTRATION OR ELECTION DATE. AT CLOSE OF MEETING, UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM GAVE SOLE COPY OF CONTACT GROUP PRESS STATEMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM OPENED DISCUSSION BY EXPRESSING OUR STRONG DISAPPOINTMENT OVER SAG ACTION. HE NOTED THAT DOCUMENT ISSUED BY ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL CONTAINED DETAILED PROVISIONS WHICH CLEARLY AFFECT "POLITICAL PROCESS" IN NAMIBIA, AND WERE THUS SUBJECT ON WHICH UN SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE HAD TO BE SATISFIED UNDER CONTACT GROUP PROPOSAL. IN REPLY, SOLE READ EXTENSIVELY FROM JUNE 16 BOTHA-GENSCHER TELEGRAM WHICH STRESSED SOUTH AFRICA'S GOOD INTENTIONS, CLAIMED THAT REGISTRATION ANNOUNCEMENT WAS "A NEUTRAL ACT", EXPRESSED DOUBTS THAT SWAPO WOULD EVER ACCEPT WESTERN PROPOSAL AND CITED VARIOUS "POSITIVE ACTS" TAKEN BY SOUTH AFRICA IN RECENT DAYS. SOLE EMPHASIZED THAT SOUTH AFRICA WAS NOT MOVING TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNAL SOLUTION, POINTING PARTICULARLY TO FACT THAT NO DATES HAD BEEN SET EITHER FOR INITIATION OF REGISTRATION OR FOR ELECTIONS. SOUTH AFRICA, ACCORDING TO SOLE, WAS "SIMPLY PREPARING LOGISTICS FOR ELECTIONS UNDER YOUR PROPOSAL." HE ALSO SAID THAT SOUTH AFRICA HAD GIVEN SUBSTANTIAL ADVANCE NOTIFICATION OF ITS PLANS.

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3. UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM NOTED THAT ONCE AGAIN CONTACT GROUP WAS FACED WITH ACTION BY SAG WHICH COMPLICATES OUR EFFORTS. HE DREW PARALLEL BETWEEN VOTER REGISTRATION ANNOUNCEMENT AND RAID ON CASSINGA, BOTH OF WHICH CLOSELY PRECEDED PLANNED DISCUSSIONS WITH SWAPO. HE STRESSED CONTACT GROUP UNDERSTANDING OF VITAL SAG INTEREST IN NAMIBIA AND OUR EFFORT, WITH MAJOR PERSONAL PARTICIPATION BY SECRETARY VANCE, TO DEVELOP FAIR SOLUTION. IN THIS CONNECTION, UNDER SECRETARY POINTED OUT THAT NO SOLUTION IN NAMIBIA WOULD SUCCEED WHICH DID NOT HAVE SUPPORT OF FRONT LINE STATES.

4. TAKING UP POINT REGARDING ROLE OF FRONT LINE STATES, SOLE COMPLAINED THAT THESE "SELF-SELECTED" NEGOTIATORS HAVE NOT PLAYED HELPFUL ROLE. SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN US AND FRONT LINE STATES, HE CLAIMED, HAS AFFECTED US JUDGMENT IN BOTH SOUTHERN AFRICAN MATTERS AND WIDER AFRICAN ISSUES. SOLE SAID EVEN SOME AFRICAN AMBASSADORS IN WASHINGTON HAVE COMPLAINED TO HIM THAT US ADMINISTRATION LISTENS ONLY TO NYERERE, KAUNDA AND OBASANJO AS VOICES OF AFRICA. UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM POINTED OUT THAT WE MUST

WORK WITH FRONT LINE STATES AND NIGERIA BECAUSE THESE ARE PRECISELY THE COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE INFLUENCE WITH SWAPO.

5. SOLE ALSO MADE PARTICULAR POINT OF SUPPORT BY VORSTER AND BOTHA FOR INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SETTLEMENT IN NAMIBIA. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT VORSTER AND BOTHA MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT DOMESTIC CONSIDERATIONS, AND HE IMPLIED THAT DECISION TO CARRY OUT CASSINGA RAID REFLECTED THIS FACT. IN THIS CONTEXT, SOLE ASKED WHETHER UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM HAD HEARD OF POSSIBLE PROBLEMS IN CAPRIVI STRIP. NEWSOM SAID US HAD SEEN REPORT THAT SAG WAS MASSING TROOPS IN THE AREA, TO WHICH SOLE REPLIED THAT SIZE OF TERRITORY PRECLUDED ANY MASSING OF TROOPS. HE WENT ON

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TO SAY THAT IF PRESIDENT KAUNDA WOULD ENCOURAGE SOME RESTRAINT BY SWAPO IN CAPRIVI STRIP, THIS WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

6. SOLE MADE INTERESTING OBSERVATION THAT ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL STEYN WAS WELL-INTENTIONED MAN WHO SUFFERS FROM LACK OF BROADER POLITICAL BACKGROUND. FOR THIS REASON, SOLE HAS FROM TIME TO TIME INFORMALLY PASSED ON ADVICE TO STEYN WHEN HE FELT THAT STEYN WAS GETTING INTO AREAS WHICH HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND. (COMMENT: IT IS INTERESTING THAT AMBASSADOR SOLE AND AMBASSADOR MC HENRY -- SEE CAPE TOWN 1065 -- HAVE COME TO SOMEWHAT SIMILAR EVALUATIONS OF JUSTICE STEYN. END COMMENT.)

7. IN CONCLUSION SOLE SAID IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR SOUTH AFRICA IF THERE COULD BE MORE PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH THE US "ON YOUR PROPOSALS AND ACTIONS."

UNDER SECRETARY  
NEWSOM NOTED THAT CONSULTATION WAS A TWO WAY STREET AND THAT WE COULD CITE NUMEROUS ACTIONS BY SAG ON WHICH PRIOR CONSULTATIONS WOULD HAVE BEEN USEFUL.

8. TEXT OF BOTHA-GENSCHER LETTER, WHICH WAS GIVEN TO DEPARTMENT BY FRG EMBASSY, IS BEING TRANSMITTED BY USUN.

9. IN USUN: YOU MAY SHARE FOREGOING WITH CONTACT GROUP.  
VANCE

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Draft Date:** 17 jun 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**Review Markings:**  
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